around that we had meritoriously praised the Lord Buddha, and then touched the earth with the striker to pass the message to the spirits there also. These big bells may weigh up to 25 tons; the bell at Mingun is said to be the second largest in the world. They are all inscribed with lauds and invocations for the welfare of the donor. Gongs of brass are the bells of the town-crier; all announcements are punctuated with the striking of a gong. *Maung le htu tè* is the equivalent of "broadcasting it around the town". Much attention is paid to the melodiousness of gongs for the Burmese have a musical instrument called the *kyi-waing*, which is a circular frame on which graduated gongs are hung and beaten with a knobbed stick to harmonize with the rest of a Burmese orchestra.

There were numerous other objects for which my mother would never accept a substitute from English shops because they did not cater for our ingrained customs. Soup never tastes right when eaten with a metal spoon—we always used Burmese china spoons bought for about one anna each; rice is not to be stirred with a metal utensil either—the Burmese wooden ladle for this is the *yaung-ma*, the same word as for sister-in-law, the stirrer of trouble. There were, of course, particular places in Burma which supplied particular articles of dress, but I took an interest in this only when I was grown up.

What delights me is to find now that, in the imported things about the house also, all minkadaw households bought a standard type. This was probably due to the enterprise of Messrs. Rowe and Co., a Rangoon firm selling general goods, which established branches in all district towns to provide officers with anything they could not buy in native shops. We all bought Gold Medal camp chairs and camp cots from Rowe's. We bought durwan's kerosene lamps for bedrooms, Storm King and Petromax lamps with incandescent mantles for sitting and dining rooms, we bought crockery which came out in three or four good standard patterns, with an adaptation from the orthodox English dinner service to provide soup and curry dishes suitable for Burmese meals. We got cane furniture made in the local jails, odd chairs and always the half-wood half-cane stores box to serve on tours, and the long basket trays in which my father's files and papers would come home and go to the office every day, on the head of the *chaprassi*. The *hpas*, soft expandable cane boxes in which Burmese people pack their bedding when travelling, were always covered with green canvas from Rowe's. With these hpas, matching the Gold Medal camp cots and chairs, the boxes from the jails, a clerk and two or three girls looking after the children, and a general air of solicitous attention from the people around, no one could mistake an a-so-ya government official's family on its touring travels.

pagodas and those throughout the country are descendants of the pagoda slaves.

Beggars are rated below the pagoda slaves - but, because of the Buddhist merit associated with giving do well for themselves. The beggars live in communities on the outskirts of the town often in cemeteries. They are thought to exhume the dead to get the coins placed in the mouth of the deceased to ensure expenses on his journey to heaven. The wood of the coffin is believed to be used in constructing their huts. Professional undertakers or morticians are regarded with horror since they like the beggars, make their living from the dead. The functions of burial are performed gratis by the entire village. A story is currently going round the University dormitories telling of an immensely wealthy Burmese coffin maker in Rangoon who has offered riches to the young man who will marry his beautiful daughter. When the future seems blank the students' friend advises "Hey, why don't you go and marry the coffin maker's daughter?" It seems that the money would scarcely compensate for the social discrimation. The extent to which the occupation classes are rigid in marriage and other social exchanges is an interesting problem.

A young man is obliged to remain within the occupation class of his family or to rise to greater heights. He is advised at an early age to "be simple, aim high, and tell the truth." When children play at daccits (thieves) or other "low class" games their parents object to their low aspirations and advise them to play nobles and ministers. One would feel justified in remaining idle rather than accept a position below that of his birth. It is better to accept a clerks job at a low salary than an artisans at a high salary. On the other hand those born into lower status occupation groups tend to be satisfied with their state as a condition of birth. In Rangoon, however, even the hawkers may have ambitions to achieve fame and fortune. The opportunities for social mobility is greater in the towns and cities but difinitely restricted in the villages.

Apprenticeship to trades begins at the age of 12 to 14 years, and usually lasts for several years. Ordinarily the youth is attached to the shop of a relative where he lives and is payed a subsistence wage while learning. The key to high positions lies in education in

181
203●

The following interview gives an impression of U Myaing's "World View" and current events: (U Myaing and Ma Aye Myaing answer).

Q. Where do you get your information on current events?
A. (U.M.) I read the newspapers, we buy them sometimes - or listen to others who buy and read.

Q. How often do you read a newspaper - once a week?
A. Quite seldom, because I do not have the time. As soon as it is light I have to go to work.

Q. Do you know anything of modern world conditions?
A. We hear what others say - that the Chinese will enter Burma. We do not know what is happening elsewhere. We've heard that the Chinese and Americans are fighting each other, but we don't know where this is taking place.

Q. How does the present situation compare with the past?
A. We don't know whether the world situation has improved or not. We get all sorts of information, but our main worry is work - and hope to provide sufficient food for the family.

Q. Do you know of the A.F.P.F.L. (Anti Fascist People's Freedom League - the major political party in Burma)?
A. Yes, there is even a sign board at the entrance to our camp.

Q. Do the phongyis give you current affairs information?
A. We don't even have a personal phongyi where we live. We

don't usually talk about these things with them. We invite the phongyis and worship them. We don't talk much with them. They preach the law and the 5 SILAS to us. 181 203

16. Q. Are there any persons of influence in camp who give advice on everyday living? 621

A. Yes, the person of influence is the schoolmaster, U Khant. But he only teaches the children and looks to the general cleanliness of the camp. Another person is the man who teaches the English. But they do not lay down what is right and what is wrong.

Activities of the Family in Relationship to the Supernatural.

771

The main forces which U Myaing and his family are concerned with are those of the Nats and those of Buddhism. Speaking historically, the Nats seem to represent a remnant of an early form of animism in which the Nats were tree or nature spirits. It is interesting to note the manner in which U Myaing blends the two religious systems. The Nats control earthly happenings, and the Buddhist structure the eternal. We are concerned with identifying some of the major practices, but primarily with the differentiation between religious practices in Pantanaw and in the refugee camp. [178]

Nats.

The problem of the Nats came up in our study by the appearance of a bamboo pole split so as to form a small basket at one end. This object, called a KYAUNG ZAUNG rested on the roof of the camp hut next to U Myaing's. An interview in which Daw Aw Zar (D.A.Z.) and U Myaing (U.M.) discussed Nats, is given in its entirety below because it reveals the rather vague feelings of "superstition" held of the Nats on the one hand and their potency on the other. 776 782

Q. No. 25 (photograph) is a split bamboo pole with a basket at the top. What is this called and what is it used for?

A. (D.A.Z.) KYAUNG ZAUNG. The thing he took from the roof and photographed? It is called a KYAUNG ZAUNG.
(U.M.) It is called KYAUNG ZAUNG.

Q. How do you use it ?

A. (D.A.Z.) We offer to U SHIN GYI and others. Offerings to Nats. Didn't you hear that big man speak? (To U Myaing).

Q. Who made this object? Who makes them?

A. (D.A.Z.) The people who give the offerings of course.

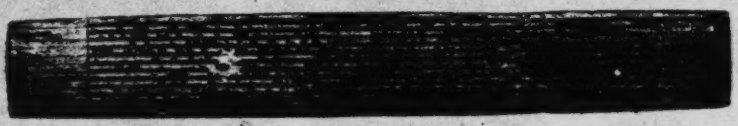
Q. Do you have to make these when you give offerings?

A. If we give offerings we make them.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

212 still is used by the Shans for their sacred MSS. The Burmans use the paper chiefly in the form of stiff tablets (*parabèik*), blackened, like the *thimbôn*, for writing on with a steatite pencil. Burmese type was cut (No. 452) and the first printing-plant set up in Burma by the American Baptist Mission. At present

213 538 177 [212] 214



274. PALM-LEAF MS.

871 198 203 there are a number of printing establishments owned by Burmans, from which quite a literature of their religious works has issued. At first the Buddhists of Burma considered print not good enough for the scripture canon. Modernised legends of the Buddha in his previous incarnations (*zat*) are beginning to form the foundation of a romance-literature of indigenous type. Newspapers have not yet taken a firm hold, even in the large towns; but news travels very fast in the ordinary way, especially news about the prices of goods. This western art has not contributed to the spread of western knowledge in the way that might be expected. The Yaw Mindyi, a minister of the late King Mindôn Min, made a most praiseworthy effort to popularise western ideas in a series of MS. treatises. A native undertaking upon a grand scale—nothing less than a Burmese encyclopædia—was on foot in the sixties, but fell through for want of organised support. In Japan, an analogous enterprise was successful. What applies to concerted action in matters like the above, applies equally to political combination. Few Burmans, even after years of schooling, learn enough to read an English newspaper with profit. To this day there is no Burmese manual for the study of English. The scholars learn only enough of the language to procure them employment as accountants and copyists. Similarly, there are few English who can understand a Burmese newspaper.

[212]

278. COPYIST AT WORK.

000 Dealers, with the exception of the